



# Sycamore Hall Preparatory School

## Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

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## **SUPPORTING PUPILS WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS POLICY**

### **BASED ON THE DONCASTER LOCAL AUTHORITY APPROVED POLICY**

This policy has been adopted to support the welfare and safety of the children attending Sycamore Hall School. Sycamore Hall School complies fully with the statutory guidance outlined in 'Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions' and the legislation outlined in the Children and Families Act 2014, section 100.

#### **Definition**

Pupils' medical needs may be broadly summarised as being of two types:

- (a) Short-term, affecting pupils' participation in school activities whilst they are on a course of medication.
- (b) Long-term, potentially limiting pupils' access to education and requiring extra care and support (deemed special medical needs).

#### **Rationale**

Local Authorities and schools have a responsibility for the health and safety of pupils in their care. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 makes employers responsible for the health and safety of employees and anyone else on the premises. In the case of pupils with special medical needs, the responsibility of the employer is to make sure that safety measures cover the needs of all pupils at the school. This may mean making special arrangements for particular pupils who may be more at risk than their peers. Individual procedures may be required. The employer is responsible for making sure that relevant staff know about and are, if necessary, trained to provide any additional support these pupils may need.

The Children and Families Act 2014, section 100, places a duty on schools to make arrangements for children with medical conditions. Pupils with special medical needs have the same right of admission to school as other children and cannot be refused admission or excluded from school on medical grounds alone. Teachers and other school staff in charge of pupils have a common law duty to act in loco parentis and may need to take swift action in an emergency. This duty also extends to teachers and school staff leading activities taking place off the school site. This could extend to a need to administer medicine.

#### **Key Points**

- Pupils at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school visits and physical education.
- The Head Teacher must ensure that arrangements are in place in schools to support pupils at school with medical conditions.

- The Head Teacher should ensure that teachers consult health and social care professionals, pupils and parents to ensure that the needs of children with medical conditions are properly understood and effectively supported.

The prime responsibility for a child's health lies with the parent/carer who is responsible for the child's medication and should supply the school with all the necessary information. The school takes advice and guidance from Doncaster Local Authority where self-administration of medication is encouraged when possible. Our School Nurse is available to give support and guidance as necessary.

### **Introduction**

The aim is to ensure that all children with medical conditions, in terms of both physical and mental health, are properly supported in school so that they can play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy and achieve their academic potential.

Parents of children with medical conditions are often concerned that their child's health will deteriorate when they attend school. This is because pupils with long-term and complex medical conditions may require ongoing support, medicines or care while at school to help them manage their condition and keep them well. Others may require monitoring and interventions in emergency circumstances. It is also the case that children's health needs may change over time, in ways that cannot always be predicted, sometimes resulting in extended absences. It is therefore important that parents feel confident that schools will provide effective support for their child's medical condition and that pupils feel safe. In making decisions about the support they provide, schools should establish relationships with relevant local health services to help them. It is crucial that schools receive and fully consider advice from healthcare professionals and listen to and value the views of parents and pupils.

In addition to the educational impact, there are social and emotional implications associated with medical conditions. Children may be self-conscious about their condition or develop emotional disorders such as anxiety or depression around their medical condition. In particular, long-term absences due to health problems affect children's educational attainment, impact on their ability to integrate with their peers and affect their general wellbeing and emotional health. Reintegration back into school should be properly supported so that children with medical conditions fully engage with learning and do not fall behind when they are unable to attend. Short-term and frequent absences, including those for appointments connected with a pupil's medical condition (which can often be lengthy), also need to be effectively managed and appropriate support put in place to limit the impact on the child's educational attainment and emotional and general well-being.

Some children with medical conditions may be considered to be disabled under the definition set out in the Equality Act 2010. Some may also have special educational needs (SEN) and may have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision.

For pupils who have medical conditions that require EHC plans, compliance with the SEND code of practice will ensure compliance with this guidance with respect to those children.

### **Policy Implementation**

At Sycamore Hall, Mrs Susan Nicklin has overall responsibility for the implementation of the school's policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions.

**Mrs Susan Nicklin** is responsible for:

- ensuring that sufficient staff are suitably trained;
- ensuring that all relevant staff will be made aware of the child's condition;
- arranging cover arrangements in case of staff absence or staff turnover to ensure someone is always available;
- briefing supply teachers;
- risk assessments for school visits and other school activities outside the normal timetable; and
- monitoring of individual healthcare plans.

## **Procedures for when notification is received that a pupil has a medical condition**

For children joining Sycamore Hall, arrangements will be put in place in time for the start of the relevant school term. In other cases, such as a new diagnosis or children moving to Sycamore Hall mid-term, every effort will be made to ensure that arrangements are put in place within two weeks.

Schools do not have to wait for a formal diagnosis before providing support to pupils. In cases where a pupil's medical condition is unclear, or where there is a difference of opinion, judgements will be needed about what support to provide based on the available evidence. This would normally involve some form of medical evidence and consultation with parents. Where evidence conflicts, some degree of challenge may be necessary to ensure that the right support is put in place.

## **Individual healthcare plans**

The Head teacher and Inclusion leader work in liaison with class teachers, medical professionals and parents to ensure a healthcare plan is put in place as is appropriate to meet the child's medical needs.

Health care plans are reviewed at least annually, or earlier if evidence is presented that the child's needs have changed. Health care plans are developed with the child's best interests in mind and ensure that the school assesses and manages risks to the child's education, health and social wellbeing.

Individual healthcare plans help to ensure that the school effectively supports pupils with medical conditions. They provide clarity about what needs to be done, when and by whom. They will often be essential, such as in cases where conditions fluctuate or where there is a high risk that emergency intervention will be needed, and are likely to be helpful in the majority of other cases, especially where medical conditions are long-term and complex.

However, not all children will require a healthcare plan. The school, healthcare professional and parent should agree, based on evidence, when a healthcare plan would be inappropriate or disproportionate. If consensus cannot be reached, the Head teacher is best placed to take a final view.

The format of individual healthcare plans may vary to enable school to choose whichever is the most effective for the specific needs of each pupil. The plans will be easily accessible to all who need to refer to them, while preserving confidentiality.

Healthcare plans capture the key information and actions that are required to support the child effectively. The level of detail within plans will depend on the complexity of the child's condition and the degree of support needed. This is important because different children with the same health condition may require very different support.

Individual healthcare plans (and their review) will be initiated, in consultation with the parent, by a member of school staff or a healthcare professional involved in providing care to the child. Plans should be drawn up in partnership between the school, parents, and a relevant healthcare professional, e.g. school nurse, specialist or children's community nurse or paediatrician, who can best advise on the particular needs of the child. Pupils should also be involved whenever appropriate. The aim should be to capture the steps which a school should take to help the child manage their condition and overcome any potential barriers to getting the most from their education and how they might work with other statutory services.

Where the child has a special educational need identified in a statement or EHC plan, the individual healthcare plan will be linked to or become part of that statement or EHC plan.

When deciding what information should be recorded on individual healthcare plans, the school will consider the following:

- the medical condition, its triggers, signs, symptoms and treatments;
- the pupil's resulting needs, including medication (dose, side effects and storage) and other treatments, time, facilities, equipment, testing, access to food and drink where this is used to manage their condition, dietary requirements and environmental issues, e.g. crowded corridors, travel time between lessons;
- specific support for the pupil's educational, social and emotional needs – for example, how absences will be managed, requirements for extra time to complete exams, use of rest periods or additional support in catching up with lessons, counselling sessions;
- the level of support needed (some children will be able to take responsibility for their own health needs) including in emergencies. If a child is self-managing their medication, this should be clearly stated with appropriate arrangements for monitoring;
- who will provide this support, their training needs, expectations of their role and confirmation of proficiency to provide support for the child's medical condition from a healthcare professional; and cover arrangements for when they are unavailable;
- who in the school needs to be aware of the child's condition and the support required;
- arrangements for written permission from parents for medication to be administered by a member of staff, or self-administered by the pupil during school hours;
- separate arrangements or procedures required for school visits or other school activities outside of the normal school timetable that will ensure the child can participate, e.g. risk assessments;

- where confidentiality issues are raised by the parent/child, the designated individuals to be entrusted with information about the child's condition; and
- what to do in an emergency, including whom to contact, and contingency arrangements. Some children may have an emergency healthcare plan prepared by their lead clinician that could be used to inform development of their individual healthcare plan.

Supporting a child with a medical condition during school hours is not the sole responsibility of one person. Sycamore Hall School will provide effective support by working co-operatively with other agencies. Partnership working between school staff, healthcare professionals (and, where appropriate, social care professionals), local authorities, and parents and pupils is valued and supported by the school to ensure that the needs of pupils with medical conditions are met effectively.

### **The Role of Parents/Carers**

Parents should provide the school with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs and provide medical evidence in support of this. They may in some cases be the first to notify the school that their child has a medical condition. Parents are key partners and should be involved in the development and review of their child's individual healthcare plan, and may be involved in its drafting. They should carry out any action they have agreed to as part of its implementation, e.g. provide medicines and equipment and ensure they or another nominated adult are contactable at all times.

### **The Role of Pupils**

Pupils with medical conditions will often be best placed to provide information about how their condition affects them. They should be fully involved in discussions about their medical support needs and contribute as much as possible to the development of, and comply with, their individual healthcare plan. Other pupils will often be sensitive to the needs of those with medical conditions.

### **The Role of School Staff**

Any member of school staff may be asked to provide support to pupils with medical conditions, including the administering of medicines, although they cannot be required to do so. Although administering medicines is not part of teachers' professional duties,

they should take into account the needs of pupils with medical conditions that they teach.

School staff will receive sufficient and suitable training and achieve the necessary level of competency before they take on responsibility to support children with medical conditions. Any member of school staff should know what to do and respond

accordingly when they become aware that a pupil with a medical condition needs help.

### **The Role of School Nurses**

Every school has access to school nursing services. They are responsible for notifying the school when a child has been identified as having a medical condition which will require support in school. Wherever possible, they should do this before the child starts at the school. They would not usually have an extensive role in ensuring that schools are taking appropriate steps to support children with medical conditions, but may support staff on implementing a child's individual healthcare plan and provide advice and liaison, for example on training.

School nurses can liaise with lead clinicians locally on appropriate support for the child and associated staff training needs. Community nursing teams will also be a valuable potential resource for a school seeking advice and support in relation to children with a medical condition.

### **The Role of other Healthcare Professionals**

Other healthcare professionals, including GPs and paediatricians, should notify the school nurse when a child has been identified as having a medical condition that will require support at school. They may provide advice on developing individual healthcare plans. Specialist local health teams may be able to provide support in schools for children with particular conditions (e.g. asthma, diabetes, epilepsy).

### **Staff training and support**

Sycamore Hall School will ensure that school staff will feel well-supported in carrying out their role to support pupils with medical conditions. Training needs will be assessed in line with the medical needs of pupils and will be reviewed annually. All members of school staff providing support to a pupil with medical needs will receive suitable training, either through Local Authority training or training led by nurse specialists for specific conditions e.g. epilepsy, diabetes, leukaemia.

The relevant healthcare professional will normally lead on identifying and agreeing with the school the type and level of training required to best meet the needs of the child.

Training should be sufficient to ensure that staff are competent and have confidence in their ability to support pupils with medical conditions, and to fulfil the requirements as set out in individual healthcare plans. They will need an understanding of the specific medical conditions they are being asked to deal with, their implications and preventative measures.



The school will ensure that all staff have an appropriate understanding of all medical conditions affecting pupils. This includes preventative and emergency measures so that staff can recognise and act quickly when a problem occurs.

### **The child's role in managing their own medical needs**

After discussion with parents, children who are competent should be encouraged to take responsibility for managing their own medicines and procedures e.g. use of inhalers. This should be reflected within individual healthcare plans. Sycamore Hall uses a specific inhaler healthcare plan for this purpose.

Wherever possible, children should be able to access their medicines for self-medication (e.g. an inhaler for asthma) quickly and easily. Children who can take their medicines themselves or manage procedures may require an appropriate level of supervision. If it is not appropriate for a child to self-manage, relevant staff should help to administer medicines and manage procedures for them.

If a child refuses to take medicine or carry out a necessary procedure, staff will not insist upon this, but will follow the procedure agreed in the individual healthcare plan. Parents should be informed so that alternative options can be considered.

### **Managing medicines on school premises**

Sycamore Hall School's 'Managing Medicines' policy sets out the detailed arrangements that are followed if children require medicines or pain relief in the school day or on school visits out of hours. The appendices to the Medicines policy detail the school's procedures for ensuring written records are kept of all medicines administered to children. Records offer protection to staff and children and provide evidence that agreed procedures have been followed.

### **Emergency procedures**

As part of general risk management processes, Sycamore Hall's Emergency Plan details the arrangements in place for dealing with emergencies for all school activities wherever they take place, including on school trips within the UK.

Where a child has an individual healthcare plan, this will clearly define what constitutes an emergency and explain what to do, including ensuring that all relevant

staff are aware of emergency symptoms and procedures. Other pupils in the school should know what to do in general terms, such as informing a teacher immediately if they think help is needed. If a child needs to be taken to hospital, staff should stay with the child until the parent arrives, or accompany a child taken to hospital by ambulance.

### **Day visits, residential visits and sporting activities**

Sycamore Hall School is committed to supporting pupils with medical conditions to participate in school day and residential visits and sporting activities.

Teachers will make themselves aware of how a child's medical condition will impact on their participation, as advised by the appropriate medical professionals, but Sycamore Hall will offer flexibility for all children to participate according to their own abilities and with any reasonable adjustments. The school will make arrangements for the inclusion of pupils in such activities with any adjustments as required unless evidence from a clinician such as a GP states that this is not possible.

Sycamore Hall School will consider what reasonable adjustments might be made to enable children with medical needs to participate fully and safely on visits. A risk assessment will be carried out so that planning arrangements take account of any steps needed to ensure that pupils with medical conditions are included. This will require consultation with parents and pupils and advice from the relevant healthcare professional to ensure that pupils can participate safely.